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RAIN IN PUNJAB, J&K DAMAGES FENCE ALONG 110 KM OF INDO-PAK BORDER

Approximately 110 km of the fence along the zero line of Indo-Pak international border has been damaged, defence sources said on Friday

65 BSF POSTS IN PUNJAB GET INUNDATED

Of the 110 km of damaged fencing, around 80 km is in Punjab and 30 km is in Jammu sector. The fence in these areas has been submerged, uprooted, or tilted. Additionally, around 65 BSF posts in Punjab have been inundated across Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Pathankot, Tarn Taran, Ferozepur, and Fazilka districts along the international border, with 20 posts affected in Jammu

BEATING RETREAT CEREMONY CANCELLED

- Due to the submerged border fencing, the BSF has deployed its water wing, equipped with motorboats and surveillance drones, to secure the international border. Searchlights and drones are also being used
- Sutlej River has inundated joint check post at Hussainiwala, leading to the indefinite cancellation of the 'Beating Retreat' ceremony | P10

10 Days

IN LAST 10 DAYS, BSF HAS NABBED DRUG SMUGGLERS ON THE BORDER

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Ballot papers best practice in democracy, says state EC

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

STATE Election Commissioner GS Sangreshi on Friday said that switching back to paper ballots from electronic voting machines (EVMs), to conduct elections to local bodies, is not a regressive move as it is one of the best practices in democracy.

"Conducting the polls through ballot paper is not challenging and should not be construed as challenging just because it consumes more time. It may take some extra time, maybe two-three hours more, to count the votes. In fact, it is one of the best practices in democracy. What is wrong with ballots? They were used twenty years ago and certain developed countries, including the US, still use this method. If the government amends certain Acts and provides adequate staff and funds, the State Election Commission (SEC) is prepared to switch to ballots," he told the TNIE. "The Constitution does not say whether the polls should be conducted through EVMs or ballots, leaving the option to election commissions," he added.

On Thursday, the state government, through a cabinet decision, recommended to the SEC to prepare the electoral list of panchayats and local bodies, including five corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), and conduct the polls using ballots instead of EVMs.

The SEC is anticipating an amendment to Section 35 of the GBA Act (as there is a provision) on the preparation of electoral rolls. This is similar to Section 23 of the Karnataka Municipal Corporation Act, 1976, Section 14 of the Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1964 and Section 165 of the Karnataka Grama Swaraj and Panchayat Raj Act, 1993 that deal with the preparation of electoral rolls, he said. CONTINUED ON P4

TECH TALK

President Donald Trump hosts a dinner for tech titans in the presence of First Lady Melania Trump in the White House in Washington late on Thursday, hours before the Labour Department said that hiring in the US decelerated in July | AP | P11

Tata Motors 1st to pass GST cut to customers

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

TATA Motors on Friday said it would pass on full benefit of GST rate cut to customers buying its cars and SUVs from September 22, when the revised rates come into effect.

With this, prices of Tata Motors' most affordable model Tiago will be cheaper by up to ₹75,000 and prices of sub-4 metre SUV Nexon up to ₹1.55 lakh. Among other top-selling models, Altroz will be cheaper by up to ₹1.10 lakh. Punch will see a cut of up to ₹85,000, Harrier price will come down by up to ₹1.40 lakh, and Safari will see a reduction of up to ₹1.45 lakh.

"The reduction in GST on passenger vehicles is a progressive and timely decision that will make personal mobility more accessible for millions across India," said Shailesh Chandra, managing director, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles & Tata Passenger Electric Mobility.

Tata Motors is the first automaker to pass on the GST benefit to consumers. This is expected to put pressure on other carmakers to follow suit.

The GST Council on Wednesday reduced levies on small cars and mass-market motorcycles (engine size below 350cc) from 28% to 18%. However, premium cars will now attract a 40% GST. The Council made no changes to the GST rate for electric vehicles (EVs) across segments.

At present, small cars are taxed at 28% plus cess, while large cars (above 4 metres in length and 1200CC engine capacity) face a combined rate (GST plus cess) of 43-50%. Under the new regime, large cars will be taxed at flat 40% with no cess. Ever since the GST reforms were announced on August 15, buyers have been delaying purchase in anticipation of price cuts, impacting automobile sales.

Advantage buyers

MODEL	PRICE DROP
Nexon	Up to ₹1,55,000
Safari	Up to ₹1,45,000
Harrier	Up to ₹1,40,000
Altroz	Up to ₹1,10,000
Punch	Up to ₹85,000
Tigor	Up to ₹80,000
Tiago	Up to ₹75,000
Curvv	Up to ₹65,000

MESSAGING ACROSS GEOGRAPHIES

Don: Lost Russia & India to China

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

US President Donald Trump has sounded a stark warning about shifting geopolitical allegiances, claiming the United States has "lost India and Russia to deepest, darkest China," just days after the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit where images of camaraderie between President Vladimir Putin, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi made global headlines.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump shared an image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Chinese President Xi Jinping, saying: "Looks like we've lost India and Russia to deepest, darkest, China. May they have a long and prosperous future together!"

The SCO summit has sparked concerns in Washington about the trilateral alignment between Asia's largest powers, all of whom currently have strained relations with the West.

When pressed on Trump's comments, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "We share a comprehensive global strategic partnership anchored in shared interests, democratic values, and people-to-people ties... We remain focused on our substantive agenda with the US." The MEA also dismissed recent comments made by White House trade adviser Peter Navarro, calling them "inaccurate and misleading."

However, Trump's rhetoric reflects mounting trade tensions.

India deal soon: US

Terming India as the 'vowel' in BRICS, US commerce secretary Howard Lutnick said India will be at the talks table with US soon

China biggest challenge: CDS

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

CHIEF of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Friday identified India's unresolved boundary dispute with China as its main security challenge, closely followed by Pakistan's ongoing proxy war.

Coming as it did amid New Delhi's efforts to improve ties with Beijing, and US President Donald Trump's meltdown following the recent bonding of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the Chinese and Russian presidents at the SCO summit in Tianjin, China, the CDS' statement appeared intriguing.

Speaking at two events in Gorakhpur, he stressed the inseparable link between geopolitics and conflict, noting that war is a medium to achieve political ambitions. "The boundary dispute with China is India's biggest challenge and will continue to remain so," General Chauhan told a gathering.

"The second major challenge is Pakistan's proxy war, with a strategy of 'bleed India by a thousand cuts.'"

The CDS underlined that the nature of warfare has expanded into new domains, making it more complex for nations like India. "It now includes cyber and space. Both of our opponents are nuclear powers, and it will always remain a challenge to decide what kind of operations we want to undertake against them," he said. He also noted that after the 2020 Galwan clash in Ladakh with China and India's Balakot strikes in Pakistan, the government permitted all three services to undertake emergency procurements.

Regional instability

Regional instability is another challenge, especially the social, political and economic unrest in the neighbourhood, CDS said

VIT
CHENNAI
15
13th ANNUAL CONVOCATION
6th September 2025, Saturday | 9.30 AM | Mahatma Gandhi Auditorium, VIT Chennai
Hearty Welcome to the Chief Guest
Dr. Palanivel Thiaga Rajan
Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology and Digital Services, Government of Tamil Nadu
GUEST OF HONOUR
Mr. Shelley Salehin
Deputy High Commissioner, Bangladesh Deputy High Commission, Chennai
PRESIDED BY
Dr. G. Viswanathan
Founder & Chancellor
VITCChennai vit.chennai in/vitchennai ChennaiVit VITChennaic
VIT - A PLACE TO LEARN; A CHANCE TO GROW

Encroachment of buffer zone changes course of Cauvery

YATHIRAJU @Bengaluru

THE alleged encroachment of the buffer zone along River Cauvery near Bangaradoddi dam in Srirangapatna taluk by commercial establishments like resorts, hotels, bars and restaurants and a religious institution has allegedly changed the course of the river.

Following allegations of encroachment, the Mandya district administration has requested the Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Ltd (CNNL) to fix the high flood level and to conduct a survey to find out the extent of encroachment of the buffer zone, he added.

Sources said the move comes after Upa Lokayukta Justice B Veerappa took up a case and directed the district administration to clear encroachments. P7

Ashrama seeks land

It was also found that there is a proposal before the government to permanently grant 1 acre 28 guntas of land to Chandravana Ashrama of Sri Durdandeshwara Mahantayogi Mutt Trust, which was granted on lease for 30 years about two decades ago.

EXPRESS READ

7-year-old shoots air gun, brother dies at farm near Sirsi

Uttara Kannada: A seven-year-old boy allegedly shot dead his older brother when he accidentally pulled the trigger of an air gun at a farm at Somanahalli near Sirsi on Friday. The CCTV camera footage shows the boy picking up the air gun while playing and pulling the trigger at his brother. The pellet hits Kariappa, killing him on the spot | P5

Build schools with CSR funds, name them after brands: DKS

Bengaluru: The state government is planning to encourage corporates to invest CSR funds in building schools, which may be named after their brands. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said a decision will be taken in the upcoming cabinet meeting. Our goal is to build around 2,000 schools" | P2

Asia Cup done, Japan team finds spiritual solace

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Rajgir

RAJGIR is steeped in history. It was one of the early Magadhan capitals and a spiritual place associated with Buddhism and is close to two of the behemoths of Buddhist centres — Bodh Gaya and Nalanda University. And it has a very close Japan connect too.

When the venue for the Asia Cup hockey was announced, some of the Japanese players turned to the internet to find out about 'Rajgir'. To be fair to them, the city, a 150-minute drive on a good day from Patna airport, doesn't lend itself automatically to be a sporting destination (though it is changing of late). The place does have historical importance — it's cultural, spiritual and educational significance goes back more than 2,500 years ago.

But when Japan's players first tried to read up about Rajgir on the internet, they were intrigued about what they found. They were a bit taken aback when Ippei Fujimoto, who had been here earlier with the women's team, conveyed the message that they couldn't drink alcohol (Bihar is a dry state). Transforming spirit to spiritualism was easy. Soon enough, though, the absence of alcohol didn't deter them because 'this is a place rooted in Buddhism' and there is a distinct Japanese connect. Raiki Fujishima & Co wanted to experience that first hand, so they undertook a spiritual journey to the Vishwa Shanti Stupa, a pagoda representative of world peace. The monument was built by the Japanese (in 1969).

The plan was to be guided by a Japanese priest who has called Rajgir home for the last 50 years. "The priest (Buddhist monk T Okonogi) came and visited the team in the ground a few days ago," Fujimoto, the assistant coach as well as the official translator, said. "He spent some time and passed on a few messages."

Japanese team in front of the Vishwa Shanti Stupa in Rajgir | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT